CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for protecting a refrigeration line against crimping, the apparatus comprising:

a) a length of solid hollow tubing, with a first end of the tubing extending into an inner space of a building wall, and a second end of the tubing extending out of the exterior of the building wall;

b) a length of flexible refrigerant line running which extends through the building wall space through an opening in the tubing and extends out from an outer end of the tube;

c) an etched line along the wall portion of the tube, positioned at a point so that the etched line may serve as a means for cutting an exterior portion of the tube from the tube body in the event the refrigerant line is crimped so as to expose a greater portion of uncrimped refrigerant line but may be cut and spliced as needed.

2. The apparatus in claim 1, wherein the inflexible hollow tubing comprises PVC pipe.

3. The apparatus in claim 1, wherein the first end of the tubing further comprises an upper wall portion cutaway for allowing the refrigerant line to enter the tubing from the top.

4. The apparatus in claim 1, wherein the tubing is positioned adjacent a stud within the inner building wall space.

5. An apparatus for protecting a refrigeration line extending from the exterior wall of a building against crimping, the apparatus comprising:

a) a length of inflexible hollow tubing, with a first end of the tubing extending into an inner space of a

building wall, and a second end of the tubing extending out of the exterior of the building wall;

b) the first end of the tubing having a cutaway in an upper wall portion;

c) a length of flexible refrigerant line positioned in the building wall space, and extending downward, the refrigerant line entering the tubing through the cutaway in the upper wall portion of the tubing, and extending out from the second end of the tubing;

c) an etched line along the wall portion of the tubing adjacent the second end, so that the etched line may serve as a means for removing an exterior portion of the tube along the etched line in the event the refrigerant line is crimped so as to expose a greater portion of uncrimped refrigerant line that may be cut and spliced as needed;

d) a repair coupling positioned over the uncrimped portion of the line, so that a second refrigerant line may be engaged by the coupling to define the splice in the line.

6. The apparatus in claim 5, wherein the tubing is positioned through an opening in the exterior building wall adjacent a vertical stud member.

7. The apparatus in claim 5, wherein the tubing would comprise PVC or some inflexible equivalent material.

8. The apparatus in claim 5, wherein the first end of the inflexible hollow tubing extending into the building space would further comprise an upper curved end for allowing a length of copper line to bend upward along the curved end to form a 90 degree bend without crimping the line.

9. A method of repairing a refrigerant line after crimping, comprising the following steps:

a) providing a soft, flexible refrigerant line extending through an opening in the exterior wall of a building;

b) providing an inflexible protective hollow tube positioned within an opening of the exterior wall of a building, the protective tube having a first end extending within a wall space in the building and a second end extending exterior to the exterior wall of the building;

c) threading the flexible refrigerant line through the protective hollow tube so that the refrigerant line extends exterior to the second end of the tube;

d) providing an etched line in the wall of the protective hollow tube at a point between the building wall and the second end of the tube;

e) receiving a crimp in the flexible refrigerant line at a point beyond the second end of the protective tube;

f) cutting off and removing a portion of the protective tube along the etched line in the tube wall so as to expose a sufficient portion of the refrigerant line extending from the second end of the tube for splicing onto a new section of refrigerant line.

10. The method in claim 9, further comprising the step of removing a portion of the upper wall of the protective tube adjacent the first end so as to allow the refrigerant line to be threaded into the protective tube from a point above the tube.

11. The method in claim 9, further comprising the step of providing a collar around the splice in the refrigerant line so as to provide a secure splice in the line.